

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please cancel Claims 3, 11, 12, 36, 37, 39, 40, 47 and 48.  
Please add new Claims 57-66.

The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

**Claim Listing:**

1. (Currently amended) An isolated bacteriophage which is lytic for *Methylobacterium* species, ~~Human blood bacterium (HBB), or both.~~
2. (Previously Presented) The bacteriophage of claim 1, wherein the bacteriophage is deposited as ATCC #PTA-5075.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Original) The bacteriophage of claim 1 wherein the bacteriophage is lytic for Pink Pigmented Facultative Methylophages (PPFM).
5. (Previously Presented) The bacteriophage of claim 4 wherein the PPFM is selected from the group consisting of *M. mesophilicum*, *M. organophilum* and *M. extorquens* and combinations thereof.
6. (Canceled)
7. (Original) A method for purifying a bacteriophage which is lytic for *Methylobacterium* species comprising the steps of:
  - a) obtaining bacteriophage from a sample that has been in contact with plant matter;
  - b) plating the bacteriophage onto a medium comprising at least one *Methylobacterium* species derived from a plant or seeds of a plant;
  - c) collecting plaques formed in the *Methylobacterium*-containing medium; and
  - d) purifying the isolated plaques.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein steps b-d are repeated with the product of step (d) until a virulent bacteriophage preparation is obtained.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the *Methylobacterium* species is a PPFM.

10. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the PPFM is selected from the group consisting of *M. mesophilicum*, *M. organophilum* and *M. extorquens* or combinations thereof

11-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Presented) A formulation for removing *Methylobacterium* from a plant or seeds of a plant comprising a bacteriophage lytic for at least one *Methylobacterium* species and a carrier, diluent or dispersant, wherein the bacteriophage is present in an amount sufficient to significantly reduce or eliminate *Methylobacterium* from the plant or seeds of the plant.

24. (Original) The formulation of claim 23 wherein the amount of bacteriophage in the formulation is about  $10^4$  to  $10^6$  pfu per mL.

25-48. (Cancelled)

49. (Currently amended) A kit for applying a bacteriophage lytic for ~~HBB or~~ *Methylobacterium* to ~~an article or~~ a plant comprising, the bacteriophage and a suitable carrier, diluent or dispersant in a container and a mechanism for dispensing the bacteriophage from the container.

50. (Currently amended) A kit for applying a bacteriophage lytic for ~~HBB or~~ *Methylobacterium* to ~~an article or~~ a plant comprising a freeze dried bacteriophage in a

first container; a suitable phage carrier diluent or dispersant in a second container; and a mechanism for dispensing the bacteriophage.

51. (Original) The kit of claim 49 wherein the mechanism for dispensing the bacteriophage is a sprayer.

52. (Original) The kit of claim 49 wherein the mechanism for dispensing is a wipe.

53-56. (Cancelled)

57. (New) A method of removing *Methylobacterium* from plants and seeds of plants, comprising contacting a plant or seed of a plant with a bacteriophage which is lytic for species of the genus *Methylobacterium*, in an amount effective to significantly reduce, or eliminate the *Methylobacterium* from the plant or seeds of the plant.

58. (New) The method of claim 57 wherein the bacteriophage is present in ATCC# PTA-5075.

59. (New) The method of claim 57 wherein the *Methylobacterium* is PPFM.

60. (New) The method of claim 59, wherein the PPFM is selected from the group consisting of *M. mesophilicum*, *M. organophilum* and *M. extorquens*.

61. (New) A method of producing male sterility in plants comprising contacting at least a portion of the plant or seeds of the plant with a bacteriophage which is lytic for species of the genus *Methylobacterium* in an amount effective to sterilize the plant or seeds of the plant.

62. (New) The method of claim 61 wherein the bacteriophage is selected from ATCC# PTA-5075.

63. (New) The method of claim 61 wherein the *Methylobacterium* is PPFM.
64. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the PPFM is selected from the group consisting of *M. mesophilicum*, *M. organophilum* and *M. extorquens*.
65. (New) The method of claim 61 wherein the effective amount of bacteriophage is about  $10^4$  to  $10^6$  pfu per mL.
66. (New) A method of obtaining hybrid seeds of a plant comprising:
- (a) producing male sterility in a plant by contacting at least a portion of the plant with a bacteriophage which is lytic for species of the genus *Methylobacterium* in an amount effective to sterilize the plant;
  - (b) pollinating a flower from the male-sterile plant with pollen from a source of interest; and
  - (c) collecting hybrid seeds from the plant.